

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 881 without my signature.

Along with every Californian, I share a genuine concern for the safety and well being of young passengers traveling in motor vehicles with their parents. Ultimately, it has to be the parents who are responsible for their children's safety.

In my veto message last year on this same subject (AB 2108), I stated my belief that the way to protect children was through efforts focused on the education and enforcement of existing laws – not the addition of new ones. I have not changed my mind.

Parents set the example for their children and the first rule of car seat safety is to buckle up. In 2006, California achieved a seat belt use rate of 93.4 percent, and parents who use their seat belts are more likely to properly restrain their children. Vital keys to successfully protecting our children are the continuation of high visibility law enforcement campaigns such as “Click It or Ticket It” and educational campaigns designed to instruct parents on the proper use of child restraint systems and seat belts.

Rather than repeatedly passing new laws in response to the age, height or weight factors of our children and modifying legal requirements, a better strategy is to move towards full compliance with the laws we already have.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger